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AUTHOR Sinhaneti, Kantatip
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ABSTRACT

A survey on the teaching of English for special purposes (ESP) at universities in the Bangkok (Thailand) metropolitan area is reported. ESP is a concern in higher education due to increased English use in Thai business. The survey involved five public and nine private institutions. It was found that all universities offered compulsory general English skills courses, most often integrating the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). All offered additional courses focusing on one or two skills, and translation courses occur in some curricula. Both public and private universities offer a variety of business English courses, including courses devoted to business communication, writing, reading and technical vocabulary, and translation. Other specialized English courses are offered in: travel/tourism (most common); international trade; political science/international relations; banking/economics; social work; general employment; advertising/mass communications; public relations; sociology/anthropology; office occupations; and science/technology. Tables present data on four types of English course offering (general, specific topics, general business English, and English for occupational purposes) at each university, including information on frequency of offering and in some cases, skills emphasized. It is noted that private English language institutes have also emerged to fill the need for occupation-related English training. (MSE)

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ESP Courses at Tertiary Level:
A Reflection of Thai Business Community

Paper presented at
EMU. Annual Conference 1994

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by

Associate Professor Dr.Kanoktip Sinhaneti

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Thailand is in transition from an agricultural country to a newly industrialized country and Thailand is in transition from local family owned businesses to joint ventures with multi-national corporations. In Thailand English is the international language of business and its creates a strong impact on education. The growing use of English as a medium in business communication is a major concern for all higher educational institutions. This paper then is an attempt to present an overall picture of the English for specific purpose courses offered at the tertiary level in both state and private universities in Bangkok metropolis area. The state institutes included in this survey are Chulalongkorn University, Thammasat University, Kasetsatra Universerity, Silpakorn University, Srinakarinwirot University, The private universities include Assumption University, Krirk University, Bangkok University, Universty of thai Chambers of Commerce, Rangsit University, Turakitbundit University, Sripatoom University, Siam University and Kasembundit University.

From the survey study, the English courses offered at the tertiary level can be classified into four groups as follows:

1. general English skill courses
2. specific English skill courses
3. general business English courses
4. English for occupational purpose courses

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Table 1

General English skill courses

University	Course title	Skill Emphasis	Description
Chula	Foundation English I	integrated	
	Foundation English II	integrated	
Thammasat	English 1	integrated	
	English 2	integrated	the emphasis is on reading 1,
	English 3	integrated	emphasis is on writing
Kasetsatra	Foundation English 1	4 skills	
	Foundation English 2	4 skills	
	Foundation English 3	4 skills	
	Advanced Integrted Language skills 1	4 skills	
	Advanced Integrated Language skills 2	4 skills	- simulation, oral report, term paper writing
Silpakorn	English 1	4 skills	reading for comprehension
	English 2	4 skills	reading for compreshension
	English 3	4 skills	emphasis on writing and
	English 4	4 skills	conversation

Table 1

General English skill courses

University	Course title	Skill Emphasis	Description
Srinakarinvirot	English 1	Reading, Speaking, Writing Listening	.
	English 2		
Assumption	English 1	4 skills	
	English 2	4 skills	emphasis on independent study, oral and written reports group discussion
	English 3		Skill in business
	English 4		executive English
			various types of Communication used in the business world
		Writing	- writing idiomatic English in business & daily lives

Table 1

General English skill courses

University	Course title	Skill Emphasis	Description
Rangsit	Foundation English 1	4 skills	
	Foundation English 2	integrated	
	Foundation English 3	integrated	
	Foundation English 4	integrated	
	Foundation English 5	integrated	with emphasis on spoken Communication
	Intermediate Integrated Language Skills 1	4 skills	with emphasis on Reading
	Intermediate Integrated Language Skills 2		writing
	Advanced Integrated Language Skills	4 skills	with emphasis on Listening Speaking
Bangkok University	English 1		Conversation, Reading Grammar
	English 2		
	English 3		
	English 4		
Turakitbundit Unviersity	English Language 1		Listening
	English Language 2		Writing
	English Language 3		4 skills integrated
	English Language 4		Reading

Table 1

General English skill courses

University	Course title	Skill Emphasis	Description
Kasembundit University	English 1	4 skills integrated	
	English 2		
	English 3	Reading	
	English 4	Writing	
Sripatoom University	English 1		
	English 2		
	English 3		
	English 4		
	Intermediate English 1		
	Intermediate English 2		
Siam University	English 1		
	English 2		
	English 3		

From Table 1 We can see that every University offers general English skill courses which are compulsory. These courses are considered the foundation or consolidation of English practice. The number of courses offered varies from two courses to the maximum of 5. The skills emphasis is usually four integrated skills.

Besides the gereral English courses, all universities also offer many courses of English in isolated skill. They are mainly speaking-Listening courses, Reading courses and writing courses. Translation skill is regarded as important as it reflets in the curriculum of some Universities (see table 2)

Table 2

Specific English skill courses

Chula	EAP I Reading for academic purposes EAP II Reading for Writing English in Action	offered by CULI
	English for Cross-Cultural Communication English Oral Communication English Interpretative Reading English paragraph Writing Development of Reading Skills Composition, Précis & Letter Writing Effective English Speaking English Critical Reading Speech Improvement Journal-Periodical Reading English Expository Writing Advanced Expository Writing English Report Translation	offerd by Faculty of Education
Thammasat	Intercultural Communication in the English Speaking World	
Kasetsatra	Structure 1 _____ fundamentals to Reading & Writing Structure 2 _____ Translation skills Reading 1 Reading 2 Reading 3 Critical Reading Writing 1 Writing 2 Writing 3 Report Writing Composition Writing Correpspondence Listening-Specking 1 Listening-Specking 2	

Table 2

Specific English skill courses

	Listening-Specking 3 Public Speaking General Translation from Englisn tato Thai 1 General Translation from English tato Thai 2 Introductory Specialized Translation Translation in Mass Comm from English Thai 1 Translation in Mass Comm from English Thai 2 Translation in Commerce & Law from English Thai 1 Translation in Commerce & Law from English Thai 2 Translation in Science from English Thai 1 Translation in Science from English Thai 2
Silpakorn	FAP Reading Introduction to Listening & Speaking
Srinakarinvirot	Basic oral English Reading Techniques Basic Writing Experience in Using English 1 ┐ practice using English Experience in Using English 2 ├ with English speaking Experience in Using English 3 ┘ Community
Assumption	
Krirk	Reading Techniques & Skills 1 Reading Techniques & Skills 2 Analytical Reading Critical Reading Writing 1 Writing 2 Analytical writing Situational Conversation 1 Situational Conversation 2

Table 2
Specific English skill courses

University of Thai Chamber of Commerce	Analytical Listening & Speaking Critical Listening & Speaking Listening Comprehension Conversation 1 Conversation 2 Discussion Techniques Effective Reading Analytical Reading Critical Reading Advanced EAP Reading Note-Taking & Summary Writing Article Writing Communicative Writing 1 Communicative Writing 2
Rangsit University	Reading 1, 2, 3 Writing 1, 2, 3 Listening-speaking 1, 2, 3
Bangkok University	Fundamenatal Writing Paragraph Writing Essay Writing Advanced Writing Report Writing Critical Writing Fundamental Reading Advanced Reading Analytical Reading Listening & Speaking 1 Listening & Speaking 2 Listening & Speaking 3 Listening & Speaking 4

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Table 2

Specific English skill courses

Turakitbundit University	Reading Skills Analytical Reading English Writing 1 English Writing 2 Note-Taking & Summarizing Listening & Speaking 1 Listening & Speaking 2 Advanced Conversation & Discussion English Translation
Kasembundit	Listening & speaking 1 Listening & speaking 2 English for social Function Public speaking in English Note-taking & Summary Writing Report Writing Advanced Writing Translation 1 & 2
Sripatoom	English Listening & Speaking 1 English Listening & Speaking 2 English Conversation Public Speaking in English Reading Skill Introduction to Writing Note-Taking & Summary Writing Translation
Siam	Effective Reading Skills Reading newspaper Articles Critical & Analytical Reading Effective Writing Skills Report Writing Public Speaking in English Translation

Course in general business English gain a lot of attention as both state University and private universities offer a lot of courses along this line. There are general business English courses, courses for business writing, courses for business reading, and even courses for business English translation. The minimum maximum range of number of courses is from 2 to 8. This is a good reflection of how the universities regard the importance of English in business. A Special notice is that the private universities tend to offer more ranges of courses in general business English than the state universities. The range of courses by state universities is from 2-5 where as that by private universities is from 5-8.

Table 3

Courses in general business English

University	Bus English/ Bus Com	Writing	Reading + Technical	Business Translation
Chulalongkorn	/ /	/		
Thammasat	/ / /	/		
Kasetsatra	/		/	
Silpakorn	/ / / /	/		
Srinakarin		/	/ /	/
Assumption	/ / /		/	/
Krirk	/ /	/	/	/
UTCC	/ /	/	/ /	/
Bangkok	/ / / /	/ / /	/	
Toorakit bundit	/ / /	/ /	/	
Kasem	/ /	/ /	/ / /	
Sripatoom	/ / /		/	/
Siam	/ / /		/ /	

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Table 4
EOP in bar graph

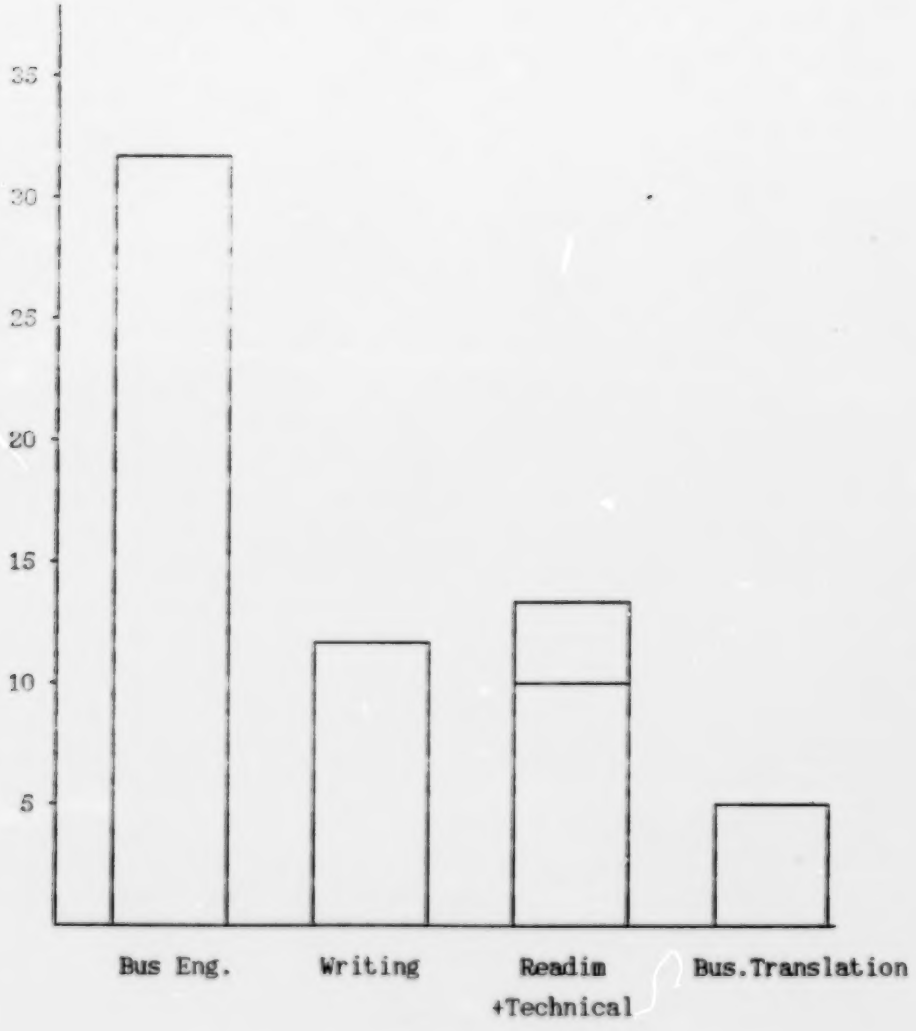

Table 4 shows the frequency of courses of general business English nature. The courses are categorized into 4 groups: general business English communication, writing, reading and technical English vocalulary, business translation. The rationale behind such grouping is to group the courses that share the same features together. For example, the courses "Business conversation, Communicative Business English, Social English, Communicative English for Careers, Listening-speaking for special communications, Business Communication in English, English for Business, Business English communication, conversation in Business English are the same by nature. They focus on 4 skills or listening-speaking skills that will consolidate and facilitate the flow of communication in general business and social contexts. The brief description of some courses is as follows: English used at the office, interpret business messages, negotiation: practice conversation on topics ranging from every day life to strictly business.

The courses under writing are certainly those that focus on writing skill. Examples of course description are "practice a clear and efficient communication through composition from structure and language of letters, intensive practice in writing various types of business letters: practice writing of more complex genres of business letters eg. analytical report, minutes, product description: writing memo, reports, minutes, telegram, telex."

The courses under reading zero in reading skill and technical vocabulary. Some of the course description are "study of vocabulary and idioms used in business: increase comprehension capacity and speed in reading research material related to business and some other scientific contexts: read articles in engineering and science, emphasis on vocabulary: reading for technical terms in technical textbooks of various fields."

The heading under "Business translation" involves the skill in translation from both English to Thai and thai to English within the business context. The course description is, for example, "translate business data from newspapers, texts, magazines from English to thai and vice versa.

We can conclude then that the course that every university offers as a priority is the course in general business communication. This can be explained why easily. The nature of such course is to

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provide a foundation for the students to have the minimum and necessary tools for communicating in the business world. Thai students need to have this basic preparation before they go out and work in the real world after they graduate. As Bangorn Savangvaroros (1983:59) has indicated in her survey research that the importance of English to businesses in Thailand has the average mean of 3.516 out of the total 4. In other words, Thai business community uses English more than 80% to communicate with other business companies inside and outside the country. Thai business community is characterized by 4 types of business. Manufacturing company is one. Examples are such companies as Pepsi, Goodyear, Toyota, Summit Oil and Siam Cement. The second type of business is trading company. Berly Jucker, IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Philips, Borneo belong to this type. Financial institution is the third type which includes institutions like Bank of America, Mitsui Bank, AIA, Bangkok Insurance. The last type is hotel and hospital business. The Oriental, the Dusit Thani, the Hyatt Erawan are among the first class hotels while Phayathai Hospital, Bangkok Hospital are among the first private hospitals which are established for business purposes. Bangorn Sawangvarors (1983:75)'s research revealed that these companies need a lot of English in various skills as shown in the table below.

Table 4

Type of Co.	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Translation
Manufacturing	a lot	a lot	a lot	a lot	little
Trading	a lot	a lot	moderate	most	moderate
Financial Institution	a lot	moderate	a lot	a lot	moderate
Hotels	most	most	a lot	moderate	moderate
Hospitals	a lot	most	a lot	little	least

So we can see from this table that the listening-speaking skills are the most wanted ones-and they are reflecting in the course "General business Communication" that is offered as no.1 by all universities. Writing is also another skill that business requires

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and that reflects in the no 2. ranking as shown above. Reading is also needed in business and that's why the rating frequency comes third. Since business companies use a little of translation skills that is a good explanation why only five courses are offered.

Table 5

English for Occupational Purposes

Name of Courses	Frequency	
Travel Tourism	///// ///// ///// ///// //	(22)
Hotel	///// ///// ///// ///	(18)
Airline Business	/	(1)
Import Export	/	(1)
Inter. Trade	//	(2)
Inter. Relations	/	(1)
Pol Science	//	(2)
Banking-Finance	///	(3)
Economics	///	(3)
Lawyers	//	(2)
Social-workers	//	(2)
Eng for Employment	/	(1)
Advertising	/	(1)
Mass Comm	///// ///// //	(12)
Public Relations	////	(4)
Office Personnel	/	(1)
Socio-Anthropology	//	(2)
Secretary	///// ///// ///	(13)
Sceince-Techno	//	(2)
Engineering	//	(2)
Industrial Services	//	(2)
Designers	//	(2)
Architecture	/	(1)

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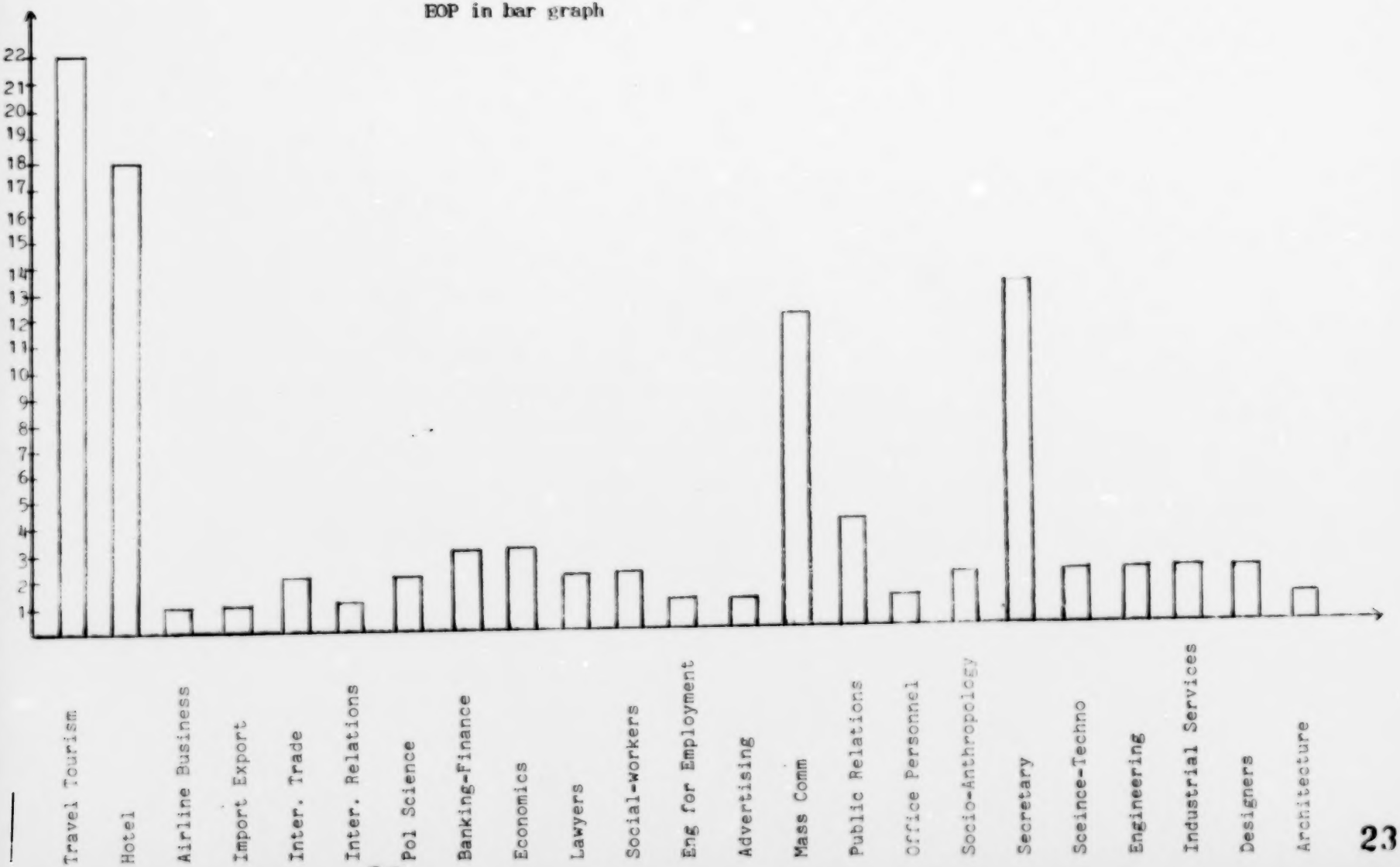
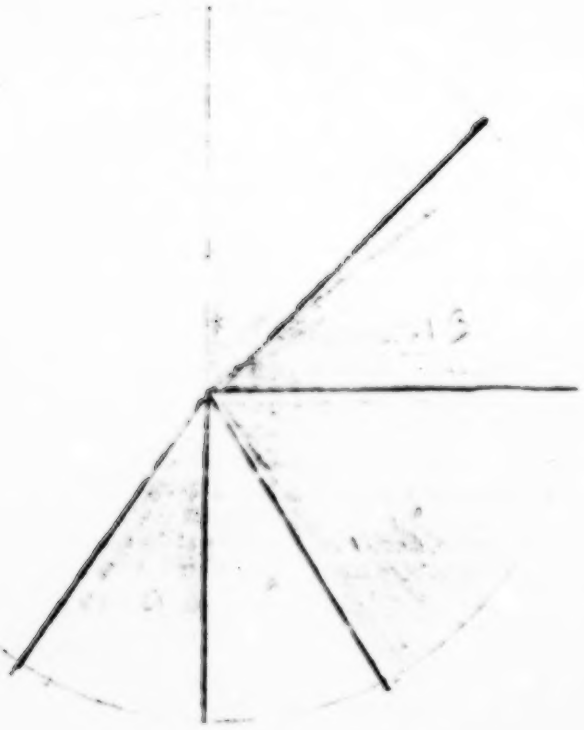
Table
EOP in bar graph





Trade + Banking Courses

Secretary Courses

Mass Com. Courses

Engineering & Science Courses

Others Courses

Tourism + Travel Courses

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Table 2.6.7 shows the frequency and title of English for occupational purpose courses that are offered by universities. These EOP courses can be classified into six groups according to the course content. The largest group is English for Tourism courses. As can be seen from the graph, there are 22 courses for travel industry; 18 courses for hotel and 1 course for airline business. The second largest group is the course in mass communication (16 courses) The third largest group is secretary courses (13 courses). Next is the course concerning trade and bank businesses (12 courses). Only 9 courses in engineering and industry are offered. The rest nine courses are for specific careers such as lawyers, social wokers. Every university has offered at least one course in tourism and/or hotel business. Some even offer up to three courses each in both tourism and hotel business. This may be a good indication of the booming tourist industry in the country. In the past decade, there is a continuing growth of tourism industry in Thailand and there is a high demand of hotel rooms. There is a lot of invertments in tourist industry which results in the increasing number of hotel rooms. This, in turn, creates an increasing demand of personnel in the hotel industry. The nation's biggest income comes from the tourist industry. During the past five years, many new hotels and businesses that are related to tourism have emerged. We can see "the massive rural migration from all directions towards Bangkok in search of employment as a result-of the rapid growth of the nation's weaeth" according to the book Thailand in the 90's written by the national Identity office of the Prime Minister 1991. Mr.Teera Sriboonroe eng, a prominent figure in the tourism industry, at the CULI Annual seminar in 1987, explained why there are many courses in tourism and hotel businesses. "the use of foreign language especially in tourism industry is gaining more and more importance and will expand incessantly as long as there are tourists pouring into our land of smile Kingdom." Being well aware of this rapid growth, the concerned educational institutes are trying hard to cope with the high demand of the market. The quotation from Thailand in the 90's by the National Identity office of the Prime Minister 1991 very well reflects the concern of such educational institutes: "Those who keep watch on Thailand's rapid development out of an educational concern will wish to see more emphasis on education for the long-term development of

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human resources to serve the increasing demand for quality in all its aspects." To meet such need, private institutes respond to the need of the country especially in the fast-growing hotel industry by trying to produce qualified personnel for this specific job market. Thus, a few private institutes that catered for such training in hotel industry are established. Institutes like ITIM, OHAP were established for this purpose. OHAP is the Oriental Hotel apprenticeship programme. This programme was set up because" the biggest turnover of hotel personnel is in the rank and file and lower middle management categories. Thailand Board Investment has also predicated that in five years' time there will be 30,000 hotel rooms in Thailand. The existing hotel schools emphasize one theory and not so much on practical training which is done at hotels of different standards." Thus, OHAP was established with the emphasis on practical training. Theory is kept to basics. 70% of the instructors are from qualified staff of the hotel itself and the rest are from outside. There are three majors: Front office Department: (which includes Front office officer) Housekeeping Department (which includes Housekeeeping operations and Butler); Food & Beverage Department (which includes International cuisine, Traditional Thai cooking, Bakery and Pastry, Restaurant operation, Bartending) The course may take six months to one year up to the department chosen. Those who complete the course requirements will receive a diploma certified by the Ministry of Education.

It is worth considering why there is such a need for private institutes despite the fact that there are a lot of universities, state and private, which already offer such courses in their regular syllabus. This argument can be approached from two different angles. First there are still much more needs for well-qualified personnel in this business or second whether the existing institutions have not yet done a good job in meeting this specific job market demand. Mr.Teera Sriboonroeng's comments serves very well as a conclusion to this argument "although our personnel in this industry have a lot of knowledge and capacity in the language, we have to be concerned of the future when there will be more needs of those who can use English. It is worth considering that English which is being taught in various institutions at present is truly practical or tailored to the specific job market requirements or not."

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